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ABSTRACT

This interview guide can be used to determine whether a workplace literacy provider has the skills to develop and deliver a successful workplace literacy program that will meet the needs of a business and build the productive capacity of its employees. It can be used to assess the capabilities of a wide variety of literacy providers, including those from community colleges or universities, nonprofit organizations, and private consulting firms. The guide was developed from a list of best practice guidelines constructed by nationally recognized workplace literacy professionals, business people, and union representatives. The interview guide is divided into seven sections. The introductory section explains the purposes of the guide, defines workplace literacy training, and lays out the structure of the guide. The second section explains how workplace literacy training fits within the larger context of workforce and workplace change, and it lists other collaborative products designed to help small and midsized companies in their change efforts. The third and fourth sections provide instructions on using the guide and introduce the seven interview questions. In the fifth section, the types of questions a business should be asking the providers who are interviewed are discussed. The interview worksheet in the sixth section contains probes for follow-up questions and spaces to write responses to each question. A comparison chart includes space to compare the merits of four different providers who are interviewed. (KC)

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ED 384 776

NATIONAL WORKFORCE ASSISTANCE COLLABORATIVE

WORKFORCE TOOLS

# WORKPLACE LITERACY INTERVIEW GUIDE

## Judging the Quality and Effectiveness of Literacy Providers

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***National Workforce Assistance Collaborative*** *builds the capacity of the service providers working with small and mid-sized companies in order to help businesses adopt high-performance work practices, become more competitive, and ultimately advance the well-being of their employees. The Collaborative was created with a $650,000 cooperative agreement grant from the* ***Department of Labor*** *to the* ***National Alliance of Business****. Current partners on the project include the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at The Pennsylvania State University, the Maryland Center for Quality and Productivity, and the National Labor-Management Association. The Collaborative provides assistance in four areas: employee training, labor-management relations, work restructuring, and workplace literacy. For more information, contact Bernice Jones at the National Alliance of Business, 202/289-2915.*

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WORKFORCE TOOLS

Prepared by the National Alliance of Business

# WORKPLACE LITERACY INTERVIEW GUIDE

August 1995
National Alliance of Business

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# INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE OF THE INTERVIEW GUIDE

This Interview Guide can be used to determine whether a workplace literacy provider has the skills to develop and deliver a successful workplace literacy program, one that will meet the needs of your firm and build the productive capacity of its employees.

The Guide will help you, as a business person or labor representative, to interview prospective workplace literacy providers and get the most value for your training investment. It can be used to assess the capabilities of a wide variety of literacy providers, including those from community colleges or universities, non-profit organizations, and private consulting firms.

## WORKPLACE LITERACY

The Guide was developed from a list of Workplace Literacy Best Practice Guidelines, constructed by nationally recognized workplace literacy professionals, business people, and union representatives. These individuals defined workplace literacy as the following:

> Workplace literacy encompasses the basic and higher order skills individuals need to function in the workplace. Using the definition of literacy contained in the National Literacy Act of 1991, *workplace literacy* is an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job.
>
> The most effective workplace literacy programs use the workplace as the context for instruction and take account of workers' skills, knowledge, and interests in training design and delivery. This "functional context" approach has benefits for both companies and employees. The approach:
>
> - Increases participants' *motivation* to learn, because they can see the value and applicability of the training;
> - Increases participants' *ability* to learn, because the concepts being taught are less abstract; and
> - Increases training's *return to the company*, because it is easier for employees to transfer learning back to their jobs.

## INTERVIEW GUIDE STRUCTURE

The Interview Guide is divided into seven sections:

1) *Introduction* – Explains the purpose of the Guide, defines workplace literacy training, and lays out the structure of the Guide.

2) *This Guide in Context* – Explains how workplace literacy training fits within the larger context of workforce and workplace change, and lists other Collaborative products designed to help small and mid-sized companies in their change efforts.

3) *How to Use the Interview Guide* – Provides instruction on using the Guide.

4) *Questions* – Introduces the Guide's seven questions.

5) *Answers* – Discusses the types of answers you should be looking for from the providers you interview.

6) *Interview Worksheet* – Provides probes to questions and spaces to write responses to each of the seven questions.

7) *Comparison Chart* – Provides space to compare the merits of four different providers you interview.

# This GUIDE IN CONTEXT

Workplace literacy training is just one of a number of workforce and workplace changes companies must undertake to remain competitive in today's global economy. For many companies, staying profitable involves the adoption of new technologies, restructuring work processes, redefining the relationship between employers and employees, as well as upgrading employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities.

All of these changes are interrelated. New machines frequently require new work processes if they are to be fully utilized. New work processes can lead to changes in the locus of decision making and a redefinition of both labor's and management's roles. Training in a variety of skills, including basic reading, writing, and mathematics, is almost always necessary to put *any* other changes into place successfully.

The *National Workforce Assistance Collaborative* has prepared a series of tools to help small and mid-sized companies select the high quality service providers and products they need to undertake successful workforce and workplace changes, including:

- *Employee Training Interview Guide: Judging the Quality and Effectiveness of Training Providers,*
- *Employee Training Product Checklist: Judging the Quality of Training Products,*
- *Labor-Management Interview Guide: Judging the Quality and Effectiveness of Labor-Management Relations Consultants,*
- *Work Restructuring Interview Guide: Judging the Quality and Effectiveness of Work Restructuring Consultants,*
- *Workplace Literacy Interview Guide: Judging the Quality and Effectiveness of Workplace Literacy Providers, and*
- *Workplace Literacy Product Checklist: Judging the Quality of Workplace Literacy Products.*

In addition, the Collaborative has published a listing of national membership organizations and state program offices supporting workforce and workplace changes in employee training, labor-management relations, work restructuring, and workplace literacy. Companies seeking training or consultant services, tools, or resources in any one of the four areas can use this guide — *Resource Guide: A Key to Organizations Working in Employee Training, Labor-Management Relations, Work Restructuring, and Workplace Literacy* — to find organizations or agencies that can steer them in the right direction.

All Collaborative publications can be ordered through the National Alliance of Business Distribution Center, listed on the inside front cover. Collaborative products can also be downloaded from our Internet gopher server. The gopher server address is INFO.PSU.EDU. After you reach the gopher server, open "Information Servers at Penn State," then open "Research Centers and Institutes" to find the National Workforce Assistance Collaborative gopher site.

# How To Use The INTERVIEW GUIDE

Before conducting an interview, you should read the Questions and Answers sections of the Guide. This will provide you with an understanding of the questions you might ask, and the answers a high-quality workplace literacy provider would give in responding to these questions. Once you have familiarized yourself with the questions and answers, you can use the Interview Worksheet to conduct an actual interview.

The ideal workplace literacy provider would make all of the points contained in the answers to the seven questions in this Guide. However, you will probably find that the different providers you interview will vary in the percentage of points they cover, have differing strengths and weaknesses, and charge relatively divergent fees. In the end, you will have to use your own set of criteria to select one from among the providers you interview. Factors to consider include:

- The percentage of points they cover;
- The relative value you place on the points the providers either did or did not cover;
- Your ability to use other methods to address any of the points not covered by a provider; and
- The fees charged by the providers — compared to each other and to your budget for workplace literacy training.

You should also ask each provider you interview to supply:

- A corporate resume;
- Resumes of any staff they intend to use for your program; and
- A list of references.

Your review of these items (which are also mentioned in question 6 in the Answers section) should also guide your final selection. Check to see what experience the providers and their staffs have in your industry, with companies of comparable size, and with training needs similar to yours. Call their references and determine how satisfied they were with the services they received.

It is worth the investment in time up front to ensure that what will probably be a larger investment in training provides the dividends you are looking for.

Finally, you can use the Comparison Chart at the back of this Guide to summarize the results of the interviews you conduct and the other information you collect for up to four workplace literacy providers. This will make it easier for you to compare the relative merits of the providers.

# QUESTIONS

When you first sit down with a provider, you will probably start the interview by stating your needs, or the problems you want addressed, and asking the provider what he or she recommends as a solution. During the discussion that follows, you will want to determine the provider's ability to develop and deliver a high quality workplace literacy program targeted at meeting your company's specific needs. To do this, you could check to be sure that the provider supplies answers to the following seven questions:

1. How will you ensure that the workplace literacy training program you develop will be tied to my company's business objectives, and will reflect company, employee, and customer needs?

2. How will you ensure that the workplace literacy training curricula, structure, and delivery methods you develop will reflect my workplace and its requirements?

3. How will you ensure that the workplace literacy training program you develop will be tailored to the needs of trainees from my company?

4. How will you customize assessments to the workplace requirements in my company?

5. How will you ensure that program delivery is flexible and will encourage and facilitate the participation of employees?

6. How will you ensure that staff involved in the development and delivery of programs are highly skilled and well trained?

7. How will you use evaluations to assure training quality?

# ANSWERS

While every provider's answers to these questions will vary, there are a number of key points that you should expect to hear in a high-quality provider's answers.

**1. How will you ensure that the workplace literacy training program you develop will be tied to my company's business objectives, and will reflect company, employee, and customer needs?**

- **Align the program with company objectives, practices, and job requirements.** Customization is key to a successful workplace literacy program. The provider should have plans for learning about your company and aligning the workplace literacy program with your company's overall performance objectives, workplace practices, and job requirements.

- **Involve management, supervisors, employees, and unions in development.** To be successful, a workplace literacy program must be supported widely throughout your company. It is critical that the provider develop good working relationships with all of the key stakeholders. Management, supervisors, employees, and, in unionized workplaces, union representatives must be included in all stages of the development and delivery of the workplace literacy program. This may be accomplished by establishing an advisory committee of stakeholder representatives, as well as using stakeholder representatives on specific task-oriented work groups.

- **Address employee needs and provide value to employees.** Workplace literacy training must meet not only your company needs, but also the needs of its employees, otherwise they might not participate. The provider should teach trainees skills that have value beyond the trainees' current jobs, skills that will enhance their job security, employability, and/or incomes.

- **Develop a long-term company human resource development strategy**. Training is not a "one shot" event. The provider should be able to help you build human resource development into your company's business strategy, and link employees' continuous learning with your firm's continuous improvement.

## 2. How will you ensure that the workplace literacy training curricula, structure, and delivery methods you develop will reflect my workplace and its requirements?

- **Address skills needed to perform work on the job.** Training must encompass the basic and higher order skills needed to meet company goals and customer needs, and carry out company work processes and job tasks, including the skills needed to solve problems, work in teams, and make decisions related to products and processes affecting work. The provider should have plans for learning about employees' jobs (current and prospective) and the literacy skills required for their work. Possible methods for doing this include conducting focus groups, interviewing and/or shadowing exemplary employees, and analyzing written materials used on the job.

- **Incorporate company processes, tasks, materials, technology, and equipment.** Training activities should incorporate and draw on company work processes, tasks, and materials. Training media should make use of company technology and equipment. The provider should plan to customize the curriculum so that literacy lessons are clearly linked to the work processes and tasks in your company. In addition, the provider should use the technology and equipment in your company, as well as such company materials as technical training manuals, personnel directives, safety instructions, and insurance forms for instructional lessons.

- **Develop exercises for which employees solve job problems.** Training activities should include regular opportunities for trainees to use the knowledge and skills they are gaining to solve problems commonly encountered on the job. The provider should have plans for learning what job problems employees face, and for creating instructional exercises that provide trainees with the opportunity to use their newly-developed skills to solve these problems.

- **Promote continuous learning.** Training should build trainee understanding that learning is an integral and ongoing component of successful work performance. It should also foster a desire for continued learning which can benefit other aspects of the learners' lives. The provider should have plans for demonstrating the value of training both inside and outside of work. While the focus of instruction should be on literacy tasks needed on the job, the provider should also show trainees how their new skills can be used in their personal lives.

- **Link with other training efforts.** When possible, workplace literacy skills training should be linked with other training required in the workplace. If you already have other training programs, the provider should agree to study those programs and make plans at least for sequenced training, if not for creating a more integrated training program. If you do not have other training programs, the provider should be willing to work with you, and possibly other providers with different specialties, to create a more comprehensive human resource development plan for your company.

## 3. How will you ensure that the workplace literacy training program you develop will be tailored to the needs of trainees from my company?

- **Assess employee skills.** Before a curriculum can be developed, it is necessary to know not just the skills required in the workplace, but also the skills employees already have. That way, a curriculum can be developed to bridge the gap between what is known and what needs to be known. The provider should plan to assess the knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and behaviors of a sample of employees from the workplace literacy program's target population in order to develop an understanding of the existing "gap." Once the program is actually begun, all participants will have to be assessed. (The assessment instrument for this task will be discussed in question 4.)

- **Allow for self-paced learning.** The training structure should allow participants to learn at their own pace. Employees will come to the training with widely divergent skills and learning abilities. Trainees who have already mastered a skill should be allowed to move on, while those who need extra time to learn should be provided with it. The provider should have a variety of techniques for dealing with this problem, such as self-paced computer programs, self-paced workbooks, and one-on-one instruction.

- **Use a variety of instructional methods and media.** Workplace literacy training should use a variety of instructional methods and media, allowing for differences in the learning styles and the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds of individual trainees. The provider should plan to use a variety of instructional methods to teach and reinforce the same skills. Possibilities include lectures, small group instruction, discussions, group learning activities, role playing, tutoring, computer exercises, workbook exercises, application exercises, reading assignments, and homework.

- **Tailor training to individual skill development needs.** Training should meet individual skill development needs, as defined by each trainee's own skill levels and training goals. Not all employees will need to study the same skills. Each will come with a different base of knowledge, and each will have different learning goals. The provider should plan on dividing the training curriculum into discrete training modules so that individual employees can limit their participation to the modules that are relevant to them.

- **Provide employees with ongoing feedback.** Trainees should be provided regular, ongoing feedback concerning their progress while in the training program. The purpose of a workplace literacy program is not to sort people by ability, but to raise the skill levels of *all* participants. Therefore, the provider should have plans for helping participants to gauge their progress and, if necessary, take steps to accelerate that progress.

- **Define success as attainment of objectives, not amount of time spent in training.** Training success should be tied to the attainment of learning objectives, not the amount of time spent in training. The provider should have plans for bringing *all* trainees' skills up to required levels. The amount of time trainees spend in training should be allowed to vary.

## 4. How will you customize assessments to the workplace requirements in my company?

- **Assess skills needed in the workplace, not "grade levels."** The assessment instruments used should be valid for training purposes and reliable indicators of the literacy skills required in the workplace. While assessment instruments that measure employee literacy skills on a grade level scale are the most commonly used, they are not the best measures of the skills required in the workplace. It would be better if the provider developed measures that were based on company objectives and an evaluation of the literacy skills required in your workplace. However, you may find that there will be a tradeoff between the *relevance* of an assessment instrument and the degree to which it has been tested for validity and reliability.

- **Explain assessment procedures to employees.** Expected performance outcomes and assessment methods should be clearly communicated to participants. Many of the employees in your company that need workplace literacy instruction will have a history of school failure. Trainees should be given clear and honest information on both the skill goals of the program and the assessment process so that they do not experience any unnecessary anxiety.

- **Assess participants' needs, interests, and abilities.** Each participant's needs, interests, and abilities should be assessed prior to training and should inform the participant's individualized training plan. As mentioned earlier, employees will come to the training with widely divergent skills and learning abilities. Before employees enter the workplace literacy program, the provider should assess their skills and their goals, and then create individualized training plans that meet their needs. (This was also discussed under question 3.)

- **Assess employees periodically during the program to guide their learning.** Participants should be assessed during training so that needed changes can be made in their training plans. The provider should plan to periodically assess all of the trainees to ensure that they are all mastering the skills being taught. Where trainees are having difficulties, the provider should have plans for providing extra, alternative instruction to bring them up to the required skill level. (This was also discussed under question 3.)

- **Assess employees at program completion to measure program success.** Trainees should be assessed at the completion of training to ascertain learning gains and overall program performance. It is important that the provider plan to measure the success of the program by documenting skill gains.

## 5. How will you ensure that program delivery is flexible and will encourage and facilitate the participation of employees?

- **Market and promote the program to employees.** Employees may need to be encouraged to participate in workplace literacy programs. The provider should have a strategy for marketing and promoting the program within your company, and for providing employees with information on the instructional process and support mechanisms that will be a part of the program.

- **Provide incentives to employees.** Incentives can also serve as encouragement for participation. Employees who complete training successfully should be recognized and rewarded for their achievements. As mentioned earlier, employees must see some value to them if they are to participate in the workplace literacy training. The provider should be able to give you ideas on how to recognize and reward successful trainees. These rewards could include anything from write-ups in the company newsletter, participation in recognition programs, and small gifts to bonuses, raises, and promotions. It is important to remember, though, that some employees may not want others to know that they are participating in the program. For these employees, articles in company newsletters and public recognition programs would be inappropriate.

- **Be flexible about when and where classes are held.** Training sessions should be held at times and in locations convenient to employees. The provider should be flexible about where and when classes are held. The provider should suggest that employees be included with managers in making logistical decisions.

- **Create modular programs.** Training should be modular so that it can be adapted to workplace schedules. Work and family already consume most, if not all, of employees' time. Adding training to their schedules will be difficult. If employees are training on work time, the provider will need to have a training program that is flexible enough to accommodate work responsibilities. If employees are training on personal time, the provider will need to be able to accommodate employees' personal time commitments.

- **Ensure program confidentiality.** Confidentiality of employee assessment results and training participation must be assured both to limit any discomfort employees may feel about participating in literacy training and to avoid adverse employment effects. If employees are going to participate in the workplace literacy program, they will need to feel assured that their current skill levels and their performance in the literacy program will be confidential information — available only to the provider. Providers need to have a plan both for keeping information confidential and for *assuring employees* that the information will be kept confidential.

## 6. How will you ensure that staff involved in the development and delivery of programs are highly skilled and well trained?

***If the provider intends to supply the training staff:***

- **Understand adult learning, adult education principles, and literacy instruction.** The provider's staff should have an understanding of adult learning, adult education principles, and literacy instruction. The provider should supply you with information on the trainers' educational backgrounds so that you can check for this knowledge base.

- **Have skills in administration, marketing/negotiating, literacy skills analysis, curriculum development and instruction, education counseling, assessment, and evaluation.** Staff, either singly or as a team, should have skills in program administration, marketing/negotiating, literacy skills analysis, curriculum development and instruction, education counseling, assessment, and evaluation. Check the educational background of the provider's staff, as well as the provider's corporate resume describing earlier projects.

- **Be knowledgeable about the corporate environment.** Staff should be knowledgeable about the corporate environment, working with individuals at all levels of the company, and ideally, your industry. Check staff's previous employment for work in a corporation and your industry, as well as the provider's corporate resume. In addition, ask the provider for references from other companies *and talk with those references.*

- **Be able to work with various ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds.** Staff should be skilled in working with the various ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds of employees. Check staff's educational backgrounds and the provider's corporate resume. Make sure that the provider — in particular the staff that will be working with you — has experience training individuals with backgrounds similar to those of your company's employees. Get references from companies with similar employees *and talk with them.*

- **Be well trained.** The provider's staff should be well trained through preparatory and on-the-job training, and continuous skills upgrading. Check the provider's own in-house training program. Make sure that the provider keeps its staff's skills up to date.

***If the provider intends to prepare members of your company's training or operational staff to serve as trainers:***

- **Prepare your company's staff to serve as workplace literacy instructors.** While staff's knowledge of your workplace can be an asset to training delivery, these individuals may need assistance preparing to serve as workplace literacy instructors. The provider should be ready to teach staff the basic principles of adult learning, adult education, and literacy instruction, as well as good instructional delivery techniques.

- **Train your company's staff to deliver the literacy program.** Staff will also need to be familiarized with the workplace literacy training program the provider develops. The provider should plan on familiarizing staff with the literacy program, conducting "train the trainer" sessions, overseeing and troubleshooting the delivery of the classes, and possibly even team teaching some of the first literacy classes.

- **Prepare your company's staff to work with various ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds.** The staff conducting the workplace literacy classes will need to be skilled in working with the various ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds of employees. The provider should have a plan for preparing staff to work with the varied backgrounds of the employees likely to be participating in your literacy program.

## 7. How will you use evaluations to assure training quality?

- **Develop measures of satisfaction, learning, application, effectiveness, and process.** The provider should plan to work with you to ensure that training objectives are measurable and to develop *multiple* measures of success. Evaluation measures should gauge not only participant satisfaction and learning gains, but also the application of new skills on the job, improvement in firm productivity and profitability, and the quality of the training process. Measuring the quality of the process will enable you to make any needed changes in the training structure. Measuring training effectiveness will enable you to determine the payoffs of the program in terms of your company's broader goals and objectives.

- **Involve management, supervisors, employees, and unions in evaluation development.** Evaluation should not take place in a vacuum. Management, supervisors, employees, and, in unionized workplaces, union representatives should participate in evaluating program effectiveness and its responsiveness to their needs. The provider should plan to include these stakeholders in planning the evaluations to be sure both that the evaluations capture information that is important to the stakeholders and that the evaluation process is one with which they are all comfortable.

- **Incorporate feedback from evaluations into training on an ongoing basis.** Feedback from evaluations should be incorporated into the training process on an ongoing basis. Evaluations must be conducted regularly to ensure that the training program is meeting its objectives. The provider should have plans for using evaluations to monitor the program and make adjustments when necessary.

# INTERVIEW WORKSHEET C

*- Feel free to make copies of the Worksheet -*

**Instructions:** Ask each question along with any follow-up questions needed to make sure that the literacy provider has had an opportunity to address each of the points contained in the Answers section of the Guide. Probes listed with each of the questions should help you to formulate any follow-up questions you need to ask.

**1. How will you ensure that the workplace literacy training program you develop will be tied to my company's business objectives, and will reflect company, employee, and customer needs?**

**Probes:**

- ➤ Align the program with company objectives, practices, and job requirements.
- ➤ Involve management, supervisors, employees, and unions in development.
- ➤ Address employee needs and provide value to employees.
- ➤ Develop a long-term company human resource development strategy.

**2. How will you ensure that the workplace literacy training curricula, structure, and delivery methods you develop will reflect my workplace and its requirements?**

**Probes:**

- ➤ Address skills needed to perform work on the job.
- ➤ Incorporate company processes, tasks, materials, technology, and equipment.
- ➤ Develop exercises for which employees solve job problems.
- ➤ Promote continuous learning.
- ➤ Link with other training efforts.

3. **How will you ensure that the workplace literacy training program you develop will be tailored to the needs of trainees from my company?**

**Probes:**

- ➤ Assess employee skills.
- ➤ Allow for self-paced learning.
- ➤ Use a variety of instructional methods and media.
- ➤ Tailor training to individual skill development needs.
- ➤ Provide employees with ongoing feedback.
- ➤ Define success as attainment of objectives, not amount of time spent in training.

**4. How will you customize assessments to the workplace requirements in my company?**

**Probes:**

- ➤ Assess skills needed in the workplace, not "grade levels."
- ➤ Explain assessment procedures to employees.
- ➤ Assess participants' needs, interests, and abilities.
- ➤ Assess employees periodically during the program to guide their learning.
- ➤ Assess employees at program completion to measure program success.

**5. How will you ensure that program delivery is flexible and will encourage and facilitate the participation of employees?**

**Probes:**

- Market and promote the program to employees.
- Provide incentives to employees.
- Be flexible about when and where classes are held.
- Create modular programs.
- Ensure program confidentiality.

**6. How will you ensure that staff involved in the development and delivery of programs are highly skilled and well trained?**

**Probes if the provider is supplying the training:**

- ➤ Understand adult learning, adult education principles, and literacy instruction.
- ➤ Have skills in administration, marketing/negotiating, literacy skills analysis, curriculum development and instruction, education counseling, assessment, and evaluation.
- ➤ Be knowledgeable about the corporate environment.
- ➤ Be able to work with various ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds.
- ➤ Be well trained.

**Probes if the provider is preparing your company's training or operational staff to serve as trainers:**

- ➤ Prepare your company's staff to serve as workplace literacy instructors.
- ➤ Train your company's staff to deliver the literacy program.
- ➤ Prepare your company's staff to work with various ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds.

## 7. How will you use evaluations to assure training quality?

**Probes:**

- ➤ Develop measures of satisfaction, learning, application, effectiveness, and process.
- ➤ Involve management, supervisors, employees, and unions in evaluation development.
- ➤ Incorporate feedback from evaluations into training on an ongoing basis.

# COMPARISON CHART

*- Feel free to make copies of the Comparison Chart -*

**Instructions:** Put the names of each of the providers you interviewed in the blank boxes across the top. Use the notes from your Interview Worksheets with these providers to place a checkmark in the boxes corresponding to the points the different providers made. Add up the number of points covered by each provider. Also note whether the providers' corporate resumes, staff resumes, and references demonstrate quality and experience, and note the providers' costs. In comparing providers, do not rely solely on the totals. Be sure also to compare which points the providers did and did not cover and whether you can address the points not covered by a provider, whether the providers' materials demonstrate quality and relevant experience, and program costs.

| QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Ties training to business objectives?** | | | | |
| - Aligns program with company objectives. | | | | |
| - Involves managers, supervisors, and employees. | | | | |
| - Addresses employee needs. | | | | |
| - Develops a long-term human resource strategy. | | | | |
| **2. Reflects workplace and its requirements?** | | | | |
| - Addresses skills needed for the job. | | | | |
| - Incorporates company processes and materials. | | | | |
| - Develops exercises for solving job problems. | | | | |
| - Promotes continuous learning. | | | | |
| - Links with other training efforts. | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3. Tailors training to trainees' needs?** | | | | |
| - Assesses employee skills. | | | | |
| - Allows for self-paced learning. | | | | |
| - Uses a variety of instructional methods. | | | | |
| - Tailors training to individuals' needs. | | | | |
| - Provides employees with feedback. | | | | |
| - Defines success as attaining objectives. | | | | |
| **4. Customizes assessments to the workplace?** | | | | |
| - Assesses skills not "grade levels." | | | | |
| - Explains assessments to employees. | | | | |
| - Assesses trainees' needs, interests, and abilities. | | | | |
| - Assesses trainees' periodically. | | | | |
| - Assesses employees at program completion. | | | | |
| **5. Provides program that encourages participation?** | | | | |
| - Markets and promotes the program to employees. | | | | |
| - Provides employees with incentives. | | | | |
| - Is flexible about class times and locations. | | | | |
| - Creates modular programs. | | | | |
| - Ensures program confidentiality. | | | | |
| **6. Provides highly skilled training staff?** | | | | |
| - Understands adult and literacy education. | | | | |
| - Has program development and delivery skills. | | | | |
| - Is knowledgeable about business practices. | | | | |
| - Is able to work with a variety of individuals. | | | | |
| - Is well trained. | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Or prepares your company's staff to be trainers?** | | | | |
| - Prepares staff to serve as instructors. | | | | |
| - Trains staff to deliver literacy program. | | | | |
| - Prepares staff to teach a variety of individuals. | | | | |
| **7. Uses evaluations to assure quality?** | | | | |
| - Develops multiple measures of quality. | | | | |
| - Involves managers, supervisors, and employees. | | | | |
| - Incorporates feedback continuously. | | | | |
| **TOTAL POINTS** | | | | |
| **MATERIALS DEMONSTRATE EXPERIENCE AND QUALITY** | | | | |
| - Corporate resumes. | | | | |
| - Staff resumes. | | | | |
| - References. | | | | |
| **COST** | | | | |

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